

fire and ice

Heathen Conceptions

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STRABO ON THE USE OF MYTHOLOGY:

VOLUME I, BOOK I¹

“To begin with, I make the point that the poets were not alone in their use of mythology; long before the poets, the Law-Givers had sanctioned myths as a useful expedient—these myths had an insight into the natural affections of the reasoning animal—for man is eager to learn, and his fondness for mythological tales is a prelude to this quality.

“It is fondness of tales that induces children to give their attention to these narratives, and take part in them. The reason for this is the fact that myth is a new language for them—a language which tells them of things not as they are, but rather as a different set of things, both new and pleasing to the mind and imagination; the same qualities that make men eager to learn.

“When you add to instruction the marvelous and portentous qualities of myth, you thereby increase the pleasantness of the instruction; this pleasure acts as a charm that incites to learning.

“In the case of children, we employ pleasing myths to spur them on, and fear-inspiring myths to deter them; as the child advances in years we guide him towards knowledge of facts, and once his intellect has matured, he longer needs to be coaxed through myth... Now the illiterate and uneducated adult is—in a sense—much like a child, and much like a child, fond of stories; just as is a semi-literate adult due to reasoning faculties that have not been fully developed, and the persistence of childhood mental habits... Given that portentous tales are not only pleasing, but also fear-inspiring, we can employ such mythology for instruction of both children and adults... They are deterred from evil courses when, either through allegorical descriptions or through archetypal representations of objects unseen, they learn of divine punishments—and understand that some have met with such experiences... There is a need for religious fear, and this cannot be aroused without myths and marvels...

“Now since this is the nature of mythology, and since it has come to have its place in the social and civil scheme of life—as well as in the history of actual facts—the ancients clung to this important system of education for children, and continued its application up to the age of maturity; and by means of myth poetry, they held that every period of life could be satisfactorily disciplined... This is demonstrated in the works of the earliest historians and physicists, who were also writers of myth...”

FOOTNOTES:

1 from the Greek historian Strabo's **Geography, Books 1-2**; English translation by H.L. Jones; *Harvard University Press*, 1917, Cambridge, MA / London, England.

PROTO-INDO-EUROPEAN:

BEYOND THE SIMPLE LINGUISTIC DEFINITION: A CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

“The PIE in the Sky Notion...”

Linguistic pathology has discovered a resilient link between specific language and certain common correlations amongst a set of people—geographically and sociologically connected. It is this authors, and many, many others understanding that these connections are also firmly cultural, socio-ethnic, and genetic/anthropological. This connection is scientifically-documented as having lasted more than 50,000-years.

English, together with all the Teutonic (Germanic/Norse) dialects of continental Europe, belongs to that large family of speech identified as Proto-Indo-European [*PIE*], which comprises—besides Teutonic—Latin, Greek, Slavonic, Celtic, as well as the Languages of ancient Persia & India. Furthermore, it has been conclusively established that this language was spoken by PIE-Aryan peoples, that originally began in a central Eurasian homeland (likely the Pontic area bordering the Black Sea), and who eventually migrated and founded civilizations as far as Northwestern Europe and Southeastern India. Not only did these PIE peoples carry with them a common *language*, but also a common culture and *mythology*... These are details which cannot reasonably be disputed; and these two sciences of *comparative language*, and *comparative mythology* rest upon a foundation as safe and as sound as that of inductive sciences in proving such...

For many-more than a thousand-years, those inhabitants of Scandinavian lands have been separated by their kinfolk that dwelt on the Teutonic continent of North-Western Europe; and yet, both have preserved a remarkably similar stock of—not only mythological stories—but also of equivalent grammar, language, and names—found as far as ancient Greece, Galatia, Persia, and India—forming a common basis for these similar cultures & religions...

The Teutonic/Germanic branch of this PIE language group (and related peoples who produced it) shaped unique, newly-formed spiritual views, which culminated in the Teutonic/Norse ethno-religious systems commonly known as variants of *Heroic Sagas*, and the eventual *Eddas*... The historian Viktor Rydberg has expounded greatly upon this zenith of traditions in his Three-Volume treatise [*Teutonic Mythology; Gods & Goddesses of the Northland*] which traces linguistic, societal, ethnic, and religious

traditions as Far East as Hindu Asia, through Zoroastrian Iran, Old/Eastern & Central Europe, and the Northern lands of Scandinavia...

The underlying premise of this work is as follows: the continuous and uncomplicated fact of ancient Indo-European existence, is that they are bound by a common language and ancestry; their social system is a tribal one; that their society drew adherents from promise of struggle, fecundity, family, glory, and prosperity; strength was rewarded with prosperity, security, descendants, and authority over others; and that oaths, honor, hospitality & gifts were the collective-glue that held extended tribal/socio-political power together...

These fundamental concepts were long-ago distilled and purified, into a comprehensive & fundamental religious system, practiced and adhered-to for thousands-of-years—prior to the inception of the Eastern-Mediterranean ethos of islamic-judeo-christianity...

This book is a thoughtful study of & inspired expansion upon the Heathen lore found primarily in *Poetic Edda* and related works (*i.e., the Heroic Sagas, Rig Veda, etc.*) which belonged to those Proto Indo-Europeans responsible for its creation, and the resultant civilization-building consequence; which is felt to this day, thousands-of-years after its magnificent beginning...

“Always was the promise of glory a path to clout and prominence...”

Folda Lithir, 1514 CE

THE HEATHEN CONCEPT OF BEING:

AN EDDAIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE CREATION MYTHOS

The anthropological conception of the creation mythos and human existence contained in the **Völuspa** is as follows: Man consists of seven *primary elements*, beginning with the *lower* and *coarser* and ending with the *highest* and *noblest*:

1. *The earthly [inorganic] matter of which the body is composed.*
2. *A formative vegetative [organic] force.*
3. *First gifts of Loder/Lothar.*
4. *Second gift of Loder/Lothar.*
5. *Hænir's gift.*
6. *Odin's/Wotan's gift.*
7. *Freya's Blessing*
- 8.

The **Völuspa** passages concerning this reads:

16

*...determined Syr spoke,
at life's command,
blessed are twain,
these tasks performed.*

17

*...found on the land
with little power,
Ask [ash] and Embla [elm]
without destiny.*

*Spirit they had not,
 “ódr” they had not,
 neither “lá” nor “læti,”
 nor the form of the gods.
 Spirit gave Odin,
 “ódr” gave Hænir,
 “lá” gave Loder
 and also the form of the gods.*

These states of matter begin with the first two lowest factors, earthly [inorganic] material and the vegetative [organic] force. At this point Ask & Embla are no more than vegetation [growing trees]...

To this vegetative matter, Loder bestows the first high gifts of lá [meaning *blood*] and læti [meaning *the way in which a conscious being moves & acts*]; transforming Ask & Embla from vegetative state into animals...

Loder's Second high gift was litr goda [“good composition”]. Bear in mind that the Germanic/Norse, like the Greek-Hellenes and Romans, conceived their gods in human form, and that human characteristics originally belonged to the gods, and were fashioned by their gods before human creation. These said peoples understood mankind to be created *in effigiem deorum* or litr goda: “**in the likeness of gods.**” This concept can be more explicitly understood in the abstract that an *efni* [an empty form, resembling the gods] gave humans *shape* and *character* to the earthly body, which is visible to the eye. In brief, Loder gave Ask & Embla the same *shape* [not substance] as the gods, as opposed to the prior form of animals...

From Hænir, Ask & Embla received the higher gift of ódr. This word corresponds most closely to the Latin mens, the Greek nous, and is defined as that material which forms the kernel of human personality [its ego] and whose manifestations are understanding, memory, imagination, and will. These are conditions essential to the existence of every person.

From, Odin—highest of Aesir—adds the highest & noblest of gifts to the nature of humans, önd¹: spirit, by which a human being becomes participator in the divine; not just in the representation of image and/or form. This gift is revealed in mankind as power of thought, courage, honesty, veracity, mercy and the humility of composure in accepting those misfortunes which *cannot* be averted by human ingenuity...

Finally, Freya imparted her most powerful blessing upon Ask & Embla: fertility, and the magnificent power of procreation, ensuring their continuity throughout the ages.

These *seven elements*, united into one human-nature, are constantly in reciprocal activity. The personal kernel of *ódr*, is influenced by *önd*, the spirit, and also by the *animal*, *vegetative*, and *corporeal* elements; whereas the personality—being endowed with *will*—is also in a reciprocal interface. If the spirit becomes superior to the other elements, it then penetrates and purifies not only the kernel of ego, but also the animal, vegetative, and corporeal elements as well. Subsequently, human nature becomes *divine*, and deserves divine honors...

The heathen concept is in direct opposition to that of the latter European christian concept of humans being merely two elements (e.g., the *corporeal body* and the *imperishable soul*). The pre-christian concept embraces a multi-complex of elements²; some lower, which can or cannot exist with or without the others³, and those of the high, higher, and highest, that can exist and evolve—interdependently or independently— but always dynamically.



The Three Gods—*Odin*, *Hœnir*, and *Lóðer*—creating Ask and Embla.

FOOTNOTES:

1 the **Solarliod** (Stz 52) speaks expressly to the seven nether worlds of existence “...**without and within, I seemed to traverse all, the seven nether worlds...**”; in relation to these are a total of seven elements/gifts from the gods... Additional, in similarly related tales found in **Hymiskviða**: the “eight kettles” occurring during Thor & Tyr’s exploit (Stz 13); **Thrymskviða**: “full eight leagues deep the ground beneath” (Stz 8); **Lokasenna**: “thou winters eight was the earth beneath” (Stz 23); suggests an “eighth” level of existence/being beyond the earthly/mortal “seven?” Could this eighth state be the transition from life to the underworld?

2 the two lower inorganic & organic elements can cease to exist, as well as the third and fourth state of life-blood & animation; while the three higher elemental states can continue to maintain their existence so long as the fifth state (the *litr*) is in place, the higher (fifth and the sixth), and highest (seventh) may persist, continue & evolve (or devolve) regardless of (or in regard to) one-another.

3 ancient heathens, aware of this primal concept of existence, insisted upon their corporeal bodies—blood and flesh—being destroyed by water, exposure, fire, or inhumation (the primal elements of water, air, fire, earth)... They knew the importance of the inorganic material (skeletal) and its relation to the visage of godhood...

THE FIRST OF FEUDS:

WHAT CAUSES BROUGHT THE AESIR & VANIR TO WAR?

The reader of the Völuspa is informed of a great war fought between Aesir & Vanir. What is not specifically explained, are those reasons which ultimately led the gods to this war. We are, however, given fragments that indicate possible motives:

23

*Then gathered together the gods for counsel,
The Holy Hosts, and held converse:
Should the Aesir a truce with tribute purchase,
Or should all gods share in the feast.*

24

*His spear had Odin sped over the host:
The first of feuds was thus fought in the world;
Was broken in battle the breast of Asgard,
Fighting Vanir trod the field of battle.*

We know from the first line of stanza 23 that the gods of the Aesir and Vanir met for a tribal “*counsel*,” the purpose of this was undoubtedly of great importance... We also know from the second line of said stanza that there was “*converse*,” or, more specifically, a serious discussion between high-ranking “*Holy Hosts*...” This indicates a conversation which was of a somber nature that held immense gravity. We are then given a clue as to the purpose of such a weighty counsel, and why it was being convened [lines three and four]—this was a discussion as to whether the Aesir, under the leadership of Odin, should “*purchase*” a “*tribute*,” or “*share in the feast*.”

First, what can the reader imply about the Aesir *paying a tribute*? Ancient (and even modern) Indo-European law called for payment of a price [*finis*] for infractions against members of the tribe or community¹. Therefore, this discussion pertained to a violation of the Laws of Aesir & Vanir [*Asgard* generally]. Secondly, we can presume that the violation committed (specifically, by Odin; generally by the Aesir) was so severe, that the Vanir went so far as to demand a “*share in the feast*”².

The student of the **Völuspá** then must determine what grievous violation of the “*Holy*” Law might have been committed by the Allfather to cause such a “*Feud?*” The evidence available for such a determination will be found in the lore of the Edda itself... What is known are three specific exploits—committed by Odin—which may have most likely offended the Vanir: Odin’s acquisition of magic/seid (which was, until that point, an exclusive province of the Vanir), his blood-bound oath of fealty with Loki (an adversarial Jotun/Ettin half-breed; also an unrepentant, repeated cause of war, strife & abuse for Vanir/Aesir alike—even the source of murder, in the case of Baldur; the cause of abduction, in the case of Freya³); or Wotan’s abuse/misuse of magic/seid (for his own personal gratification)...

Within this hypothesis, I propose that it was likely the consequence [*in diverse degrees of severity*] of all three wrongdoings!

At this point, a contemporaneous summary of Allfather’s transgressions as *Lord of Aesir & Holy Hosts of Asgard*, should be given (as though being prosecuted by the Van):

- (1) Odin entered into an all-binding, sacred pact of “*blood brotherhood*” with Loki; *Loki* belonging to an enemy *Jotun/Ettin* race—belonging to neither *Aesir*, nor *Vanir* royalty... Through this sacred alliance of blood-kinship with Odin, Loki was allowed entry into the company of *Asgard* gods—even into their sacred halls—and in so doing granted Loki the opportunity to cause theft from, abduction of, Wars against/within, insult to and abuse of [and even murder of one of] the members of the *High Assembly* of gods...

- (2) Loki, under safeguard of Allfather, committed transgressions of *Ergi* (*devious crimes against nature*), which resulted in the creation of monstrous, avowed enemies [e.g., *Fenrir*] of the assembly of Asgard gods...
- (3) Wotan acquired mystical/magical secrets (of *Seid* & charms/spells) for himself, likely through methods that were the explicit province of the Vanir; and most probably without sanction of the Van...
- (4) Odin used the very same acquired charms/magic for purposes of deceit and sexual offense⁴ [likely, the most terrible of transgressions] against maidens of Jotun-kind (behavior much more analogous to that of Loki's, rather than that of the ruler of Asgard)...

We know that the gods held counsel, we have an idea of the issue at hand: *our king violated our laws—he is not fit to rule...* the Van insisted it was their turn to select a ruler more fit to rule... the converse became heated—Odin, in a fit threw his spear between the arguing sides, landing it at the end of the hall (most likely Yggdrasill)... there the spear sat... a declaration of the leader of the As... NO MORE TALKING—we settle this by combat!!! We know from heathen ritual that those who endure TRIAL BY COMBAT will be redeemed by the outcome... the Van won... but in their love of Aesir and all REALMS, decided to be magnanimous... that there would be a co-regency between AS and VAN...



The “Triple Goddess” Gulvieg as represented in this depiction upon an ancient Black Sea token... Note the flames, weapons of war and symbols of peace/treaty (meal plate and flagon of drink)... Odin/Wotan’s hounds stand astride the Goddess seeming to protect her from serpents.



The “Three Weirds of Fate,” Greece 5th Century B.C.E.

FOOT NOTES:

1 this concept was known anciently as **Weirgelt/Weregild** (amongst the Teutons/Saxons/Norse) also **Afrád Gjalda**; it is known as **Restitution** in modern common-law, or **Paying Your Debt to Society** in present vernacular. Simply put, it was a payment exacted upon an individual (or group) who committed a crime or injustice against another individual (or group).

2 specifically, a position in the reign of Asgard. This point has been accounted for in the previous chapter.

3 The more liberally translated **Bellows Edda**, for the same stanzas of **Völuspa**, validate this same idea—even going so far as the blaming of the abduction of Freya as one specific motive for this war:

23.

*On the host his spear / did Othin hurl,
Then in the world / did war first come;
The wall that girdled / the gods was broken,
And the field by the warlike / Wanes was trodden.*

24.

*Then sought the gods / their assembly-seats,
The holy ones, / and council held,
Whether the gods / should tribute give,
Or to all alike / should worship belong.*

25.

*Then sought the gods / their assembly-seats,
The holy ones, / and council held,
To find who with venom / the air had filled,
Or had given Oð's bride / to the giants' brood.*

[From this, could we also conclude that Loki intervened in the pending marriage of Odin-Oð & Freya? That Loki perhaps was maliciously working against a formal union of Aesir & Vanir, prior to the “First of Wars?”]

4...specifically, the revenge-driven, magical-deception, and vile rape of the Giantess **Rindr/Rind**...

UNDERSTANDING THE VÖLUSPA:

THE MATRIMONY OF FREYA (FRIGG) & OÐ/ODIN (YGG); [AND THE SUBSEQUENT ACCORD REACHED IN THE AESIR/VANIR WAR]

“Confounding stanzas were they—one-and-twenty and further—to scholar or skald, to master or novice... So long, did those Völuspaic meanings slumber, and stand, in mystery, unquestioned, and taken at face. Lo, they are the gem, bursting with truth—a bright gift—endowed to us through wisdom, conveyed by account of Gods, of Goddess—of all-being, of consolation, and cosmic law!”¹

An enigmatic quote, concerning certain inscrutable stanzas within **Völuspa**... What are we to interpret? What do stanzas 21-24 fittingly explain about this war between Aesir and Vanir? What is certain and clear, is that the **Völuspa** is a vastly fragmented written retelling, and that it has been most certainly interpolated. The forgoing is a sophisticated effort to accurately understand both existent and contemplated Eddaic lore & myth.

21

*I ween the first war in the world was this,
When the Gods Gullveig did gash with their spears,
In the halls of Har burned her—
Three times scalded they the thrice reborn,
Ever and anon: even now she liveth.*

*Heith she was greeted where to homes she came,
The wise seeress, and magic she plied—
Cast spells where she could, cast spells on the mind:
To wicked women she was welcome ever.*

*Then gathered together the gods for counsel,
The Holy Hosts, and held converse:
Should the Aesir a truce with tribute purchase,
Or should all gods share in the feast.*

*His spear had Odin sped over the host:
The first of feuds was thus fought in the world;
Was broken in battle the breast of Asgard,
Fighting Vanir trod the field of battle.*

What follows is an elucidation of these four stanzas (21-24), which is neither enigmatic, nor elaborate... To the contrary, it is *straightforward*, and based upon information found throughout the *Eddas*, as well the known related religious lore and practices of pre-Christian Indo-Europeans. It is also a genuine foundation for an evident clarification (and comprehension) of the explicit Origins, Identities, Relationships, and Natures of the ancient Aesir/Vanir deities, as well as how we regard them in a spiritual context...

Our understanding begins with the first line of stanza 21: we are told of a war—“*the first war*”—between the gods of the Aesir & Vanir. Line two informs us that the question of this war pertains to an incident² involving “*Gullveig...*” (this is a known kenning and/or persona of the Vanir goddess Freya), “*...in the Halls of Har*” (“Har” being cognate with the Germanic “*Honor*,” and also a kenning for the Aesir lord Odin).

Freya is described in line four as “*the thrice reborn*,” which is a known kenning, and also an acknowledged pre-christian description of the ancient and impressive persona of the **Triple-Goddess**, found throughout early branches of Indo-European faith and lore (*Rig Veda*, *Zed Avesta*, *Edda*, & many others). Historians and anthropologists have expounded upon the meaning of the Triple-Goddess, defining it as a primal representation of the three distinct chapters of female vigor and being: the *Virgin*, the *Mother*, and the *Crone*; also, an explicit depiction of three female phases: *pre-menstruation*, *menstruation*, and *menopause*. These same tripartite aspects are also found in the **Lokasenna** (e.g., *Gefjon—the virgin*, *Freya—the bachelorette*, and *Frigga—the wife*).

Stanza 22 (lines two & three) attribute shamanic, supernatural powers to Gullveig/Freya: “*The wise seeress, and magic she plied—cast spells where she could, cast spells on the mind*.” Line four further explains the admiration of said powers among mortal women (those who are, like the speaker of the *Völuspa*, probably seeresses/priestesses themselves). The word “*wicked*” in this line presents certain disagreement with the spirit of *Völuspa*, and is most likely a mistranslation, or worse, an intentional corruption via ideas held by the later christian translators.

Stanza 23, line four, affirms, “*share in the feast*”, which is a known kenning for—as well as an ancient heathen expression meaning—“*meet in battle*.” Other, more contemporary transliterations, express this as meaning, “*share in the sacrifice*,” or, more explicitly, that the gods of the Vanir and the Aesir would share in the recognition and “votive adoration” [ostensibly ridiculous for deities of *valor*] by their mortal adherents (in the same way as heathen warrior clan chieftains would sponsor and share feasts with their troops as a show of the chieftain’s ruling tribal status). This will be expounded upon further in this treatise...

Is it really so far-fetched that a synthesis of the two differing Aesir & Vanir sociopolitical structures could be—and was—achieved through matrimony? This author, as well as many of my learned colleagues confidently postulate that yes [!], these two religious tribal systems mended the breach of war through marriage of the Aesir chief—Odin/Wotan—with that of the Vanir Queen (or Princess)—Freya/Frigga—and that the kin of Freya (her brother, Prince Frey, her father, King Njorth, and the sea-lord Aegir) were adopted into the Aesir pantheon & lore.

If we apply the logical simile of mortal man, to that of deity, we find an appropriately notable (and historically documented custom) followed by ancient Indo-Europeans (dated from as early as about 2500-BCE, and continuing well into the *early 18th-century*)... Long standing wars between empires (nations, and/or tribes), are healed diplomatically, through the matrimony between the ruling-class of respective combatants. Each (respective bride and groom) sharing in the governance and wealth of his/her counterpart, as well as over the jointly combined populace and state. When

this is applied to an armistice (and agreement), the victor extracted from the conquered a grant (or “dowry”³), namely a portion of the conquered empire (soldiers, citizens, beasts, lands, etc.)...

Once married into a royal family, it was the Right of the bride to take possession from a Lord a Dowry, as well as a possession of her husband’s “Sir,” or family name—hence, Freya did incorporate Ygg’s (a well known Surname for Odin⁴) into her own, transforming Freya to Frigga (or something closely resembling Frey-ygg-a)... This logic becomes apparent and easier to follow the deeper we look!

Let us examine the aspect of a dowry, given in exchange for a co-regency of gods Aesir & Vanir... If Freya was, in fact, wed to Wotan, what was her reward? Much as in times of old—as well as in contemporary times—the recompense was HALF of the husbands wealth, in other words, HALF of Aesir lord Odin’s afterlife kingdom: **Grimnismal, Stanza 14**, “...where Freya chooses whose seats shall have in her hall; half of the slain are hers each day, and half are Odin’s sworn [own]. “In this way all the spoils of souls lost in battle are divided up between All-father and Freya, and both gods of Aesir & Vanir “Share in the feast.”

52

*Another woe awaiteth Hlin [Frigga/Freya],
When forth goes Odin to fight the Wolf,
And the slayer of Beli [a known kenning for Frey] to battle with Surt:
Then Frigg’s [Freya’s] husband will fall lifeless.*

The above cited **Stanza 52** of the **Völuspa** gives us the most tangible and conclusive evidence of who Frigga (Freya) is through her relationship to both Odin and Frey—her “second sorrow” (after that of the death of her son Baldur)—occurs during the battle of Ragnarok, when her “Joy will perish...” Why? Because of the loss, not only of her husband, Odin, but also the loss of her brother, Frey!

A deeper-look at the obscure evidence which supports the matrimony of All-Father and Freya is found by scrutinizing specific books of the Elder Edda—two of which: **Völuspa & Hyndluljóð**... In Stanza 29 of the Völuspa, Freya is referred to as “Oð’s Maid,” (Oð is cognate with *Odin*, and found in various kennings referring to Wotan/Odin). One example found at the end of **Hyndluljóð** “you [Freya] ran to Oð, ever looking,” (this almost sounds like Hera peering over Zeus’s neck). Another instance includes a Skaldic kenning which describes Freya as “Oð’s bed friend.” It is also noticeable that Oð is a cognate with (as well as doublet of) Odin’s name (Similar to the names Ull and Ullin—Od and Odin).



Freya in her cat-driven chariot, escorted by her two alternate egos/personas.

FOOT NOTES:

1 *Folda Lither*, (a heroic heathen “truth bearer”—burned at the stake November 9, 1514 ACE. Born April 20, 1488, Folda’s mother *Greta Mater*, was hung shortly thereafter in 1495 ACE).

2 the subject of which must be further detailed at length in another chapter, which is based upon a self imposed shamanic test, similar to Odin’s self-sacrifice upon the tree—stabbed, as was *Gullveig*, by a spear.

3 or a “share in the feast”, as stated in ***Völuspa***, Stanza 23.

4 The name “Ygg” for Odin/Wotan is found nearly a dozen times in the Stanzas of the Elder Edda, including: ***Völuspa***, Stz’s 28, 29 & 62; ***Vafthruðnismál***, Stz 5; ***Grímsmál***, Stz’s 9 & 55; ***Hymiskviða***, Stz 2; ***Fafnismál***, Stz 43... It is also found in many Eddaic kennings pertaining to All-Father, including “Yggdrasil,” meaning “Odin’s Steed.”

THE WARRIOR CULT OF ODIN:

CONFLICT WITH AND SUPLANTATION OF THE WEREWOLF WARRIOR CULT

RIG VEDA 4.26.2— SOMA AND INDRA AND THE EAGLE:

“I gave to Earth the Aryan¹”

Early in the development of the societies related to Proto-Indo-European warrior cults, was that of the “*Ulfhednar*,” or Werewolf (man-wolf)² warrior caste. This specialized class of warrior has a lineage evident as far back as the prominently featured artwork of the Upper Paleolithic the caves of Europe (30,000+ BCE), and enduring—*thousands-of-years*—evidence of such found in the societal regions of “Old Europe” and it’s Pontic steppes (as early as 3,000+ BCE)... These wolf-cults existed, nearly unbroken, until the dawn of the primal Warrior-Cult of “Man-God” or the “super-human-warrior” Cult of Wotan/Odin (similarly Zeus/Lugh/Indra)...

The “*Ulfhednar*” warrior-cult (remnants of which survived in many forms—even until that of the Viking-age “Berzerkers,” *bear-warrior*, and Celtic-age “Cuchulainn,” *Hound-Warrior*) was centered around the paradigm of the wolf-man, whose totem embraced a anthrozoomorphic bond with the animistic, vicious, and ferocious pack-raiding features ascribed to the wolf throughout Indo-European mythos (e.g., the Roman parable of it’s human founders being suckled and raised by wolves).

Anthropological historical corroboration delineates a Proto-Indo-European raiding ritual that sent their young initiates out on livestock raids (pre-dating 3000 BCE). This was the institution of the “*Männerbünde*,” “*Korios*,” or “*Panis*”: the warrior brotherhood of young men that were bound by oath to one another, or to ancestors, during a ritually prescribed raid, has been anthropologically reconstructed as a central part of such *Proto-Indo-European* initiation rituals. These same rituals survived for thousands-of-years, evinced by extant historical records that specifically pertain to rituals practiced by Galatians, Thracians, Skythians, Teutons, Vedic, and other ancient Indo-European peoples; well into the early centuries of the Common Era.

The most significant material trait linked to these ceremonies was the wolf (or hound); these young initiates were “possessed” by the wolf (or hound) spirit, and customarily wore the skins of their totem during their initiation. Canine-tooth-necklaces were worn as pendants, and often found in PIE (e.g., *Yamnaya* culture) graves in the western Pontic steppes (as discovered in the *Ingul Valley*, a known region of these migrations [about 3000 BCE]).

A second material trait linked to the *Korios* [*Panis*³], was the “*Ulfhednar*” belt, or girdle. *Korios* raiders wore little more than these belts (similar to much later warrior-figures in Celtic & Germanic occurrence, i.e., the Anglo-Saxon *Fingelsham* belt buckle). Initiates on raids often wore two belts: the leader of the raid wore a single belt, signifying his being bound by a single oath to an early war-god (likely a variant of Tyr/Tuiw/Zues) or to tribal *ancestors*, whereas the initiates following the leader wore two belts, showing they were double-bound to their war-god/ancestors and to their leaders. Stone anthropomorphic stelae (resembling similarly themed paintings found in the *Chauvet & Lascaux caves* of Southwest France and *Altamira caves* in Northern Spain⁴) were erected over hundreds of *Yamnaya* graves between the *Ingul* and *South Bug* valleys (and sometimes as far west as modern Bulgaria & Hungary); the same region where canine pendants were widespread. The most common clothing element carved upon these stelae, was a belt; often with an axe or pair of sandals attached to the belt. Typically, it was a single belt—most likely symbolizing a leader of the raid.

One of the most well-known early examples of the *super-human* warrior cult unseating and supplanting that of the *korios*, is exemplified by the northern invading tribes of *Mycenaean* “Greeks”; earliest of documented pioneers in establishing deities who did not resemble half-animal/half-human (“*hybrid*” [monster] *deities*). These early northern “barbarians” instead opted-for, and celebrated gods that resembled themselves (male and female), and embodied those eternal struggles and feelings of the common being.⁵ These Greco-“super-humans” were epitomized by such deities as Athena, Apollo, Aphrodite, and so-on...

The warnings against induction into the werewolf cult⁶ are allegorized in the ***Volsunga Saga***, specifically in the parable of Sigmund, and his son Sinfjötli; whereas, by the wearing of enchanted wolf skins, they themselves become werewolves. While in this “*Ulfhednar*” state, the father, Sigmund, in a “*berserker*” type rage, mortally wounds his son, Sinfjötli. Soon after this attack of father upon son, Wotan intervenes; who, through his raven, delivers an enchanted leaf that cures Sinfjötli’s lethal wounds. Shortly after, both Sigmund and Sinfjötli shed their wolf skins, transform back into men, curse their use, and consign the werewolf pelts to destruction by fire ⁶...

Early Eddaic texts reference a struggle between “*the Eagle*” [a pan-mythic symbol for *Odin*, *Zeus*, and *Indra*, respectively] and the *werewolf*. An Eddaic allegory specifically prohibits initiates from reaching Odin’s Hall if they are trapped by a werewolf who fishes for men in the river [of purification] surrounding Odin’s Hall... To enter the Hall [and Warrior-Cult] of Odin, the initiate must overcome the bestial-nature of the Werewolf (*Grimnismal* 9-10)... This Wotanic/Odinist warrior-caste concept is further evinced by the symbol that adorns the entrance to *Allfather’s* Hall—a bloody Eagle perched atop a Wolf; an unsubtle emblem implying that warriors may enter Allfather’s abode, but not through the warrior cult of “*Ulfhednar*...”

This transition can certainly be viewed as a vital development in spiritual evolution: a progression from primitive man-animal ethos, to one more in tune with the sanctity of man and man-god...

FOOTNOTES:

1 “Super-Human... Man-God,” (exemplified in both **Edda** & **Rig Veda**)

2 also known as **Loupgarou**...

3 **Rig Veda** 7.104: “THE DEMONS IN HELL,” called by the thunder-god Indra “**DEVOURERS**” [Norse “**ETINS**,” translated as “eaters”]... Verse 20 states “There they go! The Dog-Sorcerers,” [translated in Vedic Sanskrit as a sorcerer who takes the form of a dog; a werewolf]... Indra’s response to their threat was to “crush the demon into powder, as if with a millstone.” So much as did Thor to the Etins with his “millstone” hammer (Mjolnir)...

4 the caves of **Chauvet**, contain zoomorphic/man-animal art over 30,000 years old, and similar art of **Lascaux** date from as much as 18,000 years ago. Pottery in the form of hounds/wolfs wearing human masks was unearthed in the region of Gorni Pasarel, central-Bulgaria/East Balkan, dating prior to 4000 BCE... Rock-crystal and terra cotta, portraying animal-man faced cult vases, shaped in dog figurines, and were discovered in Cucuteni era sites near the Podei-region of Western Ukraine that dated as early as 5000 BCE... Additional hound/wolf painted vases were prominent in finds of the later Cucuteni finds of nearby Moldavia (circa 4000 BCE)—some of these finds depicted hounds/wolves riding upon the backs of horses, posing in ritualistic raiding style...

5 see the chapter concerning **HEATHEN CONCEPT OF BEING**...

6 the book of **Harbarðsljóð**, stanza 37, mentions an analogous slaying of “Berserkers...”

THE MYSTICAL SUM OF NINE:

FOUNDATION OF THE HEATHEN COSMIC SYSTEM

The mystic sum of nine is found throughout the books and stanzas of the Edda, as well as other sources of recorded Indo-European, pre-Christian myth and religion...

Völuspa, Stz. 54: "Nine feet [steps] will go Fiorgyn's son..."

Hávamål, Stz. 140: "I know that I hung, on a wind-rocked tree, nine whole nights..."; "Potent songs nine from the fame son I learned..."

Hymiskviða, Stz. 7: "...heads she had nine hundred."

Skirnismål, Stz. 39: "Nine nights hence, there to Njord's son Gerd will grant delights"

Rígsmål, Stz. 6, 18, and 30: "Nine months then passed away."

Fiölsvinnsmål, Stz. 27: "...in an iron chest it lies... and with nine strong locks secured."

Hyndluljóð, Stz. 25: “There was one born, in times of old, with wondrous might endowed, of origin divine: nine Jotun maids gave birth to the gracious god, at the worlds margin.”

Solarlióð, Stz. 51: “In the Norns’ seat nine days I sat, thence I was mounted upon horse...”; Stz. 79, “Here are runes which have engraven Njord’s daughters nine...”

Helgakviða: “Nine Valkyriur”; Stz. 16, “Nine rasts shouldst thou be underground...”; Stz. 38, “Nine wolves we begat in Sagunes...”

Gróttasöngur, Stz. 11: “Nine winters we playmates were...”

The book of Alvíssmál also delineates nine distinct living beings [classifications of existence], these are:

**The gods (Aesir)*

**The wanes (Vanir)*

**Giants*

**Elves*

**Men*

**Dwarves*

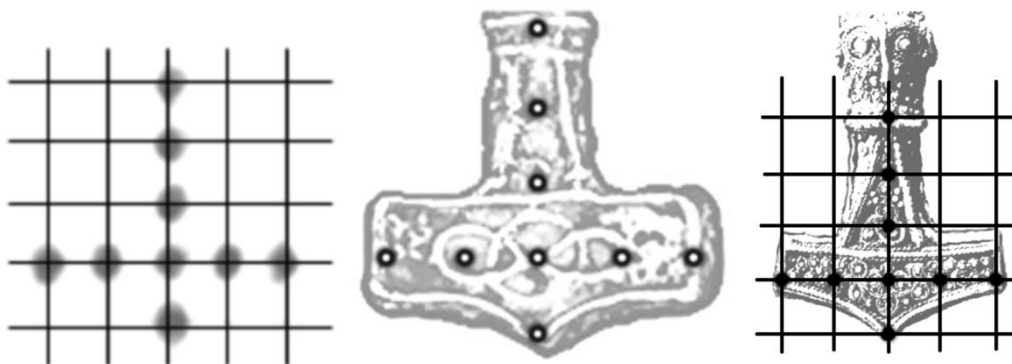
**Dwellers of Hel (the dead)*

**Sons of the gods (heroes)*

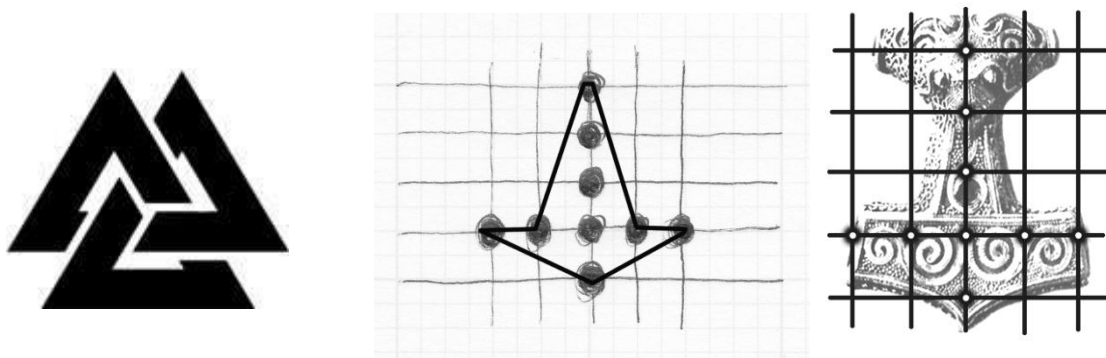
**The holy high ones (priests)*

These very same *sums-of-nine* are found and reflected in the ancient and complex symbolism/iconography of early Indo-European heathens...

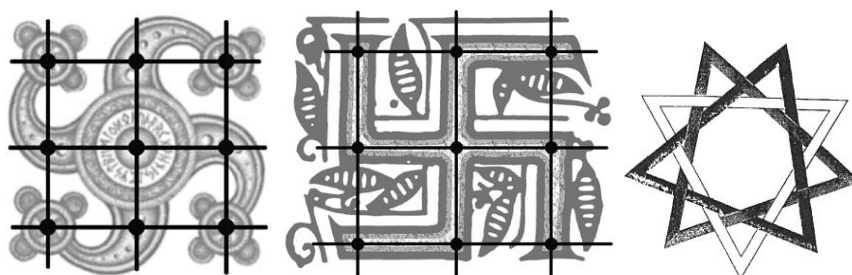
SUM-OF-NINE BASED EXAMPLES OF HEATHEN ICONS



Nine points, equidistant (*left*) form the proportions of the sacred *Hammer-of-Thor* (*center & right*).



When these nine points are assembled at geometrically arranged angles (*left*), they maintain the same remarkable shape of the *Thor's-Hammer* Icon (*center*), and the nine pointed Valknot (*right*).



The Fylfot (*left*) is often used in Old-European (Caspian, Black Sea, West Ural) pre-christian mystic symbols, frequently indicating change and eternal struggle... Whereas the Indo-European (New-Europe, Eurasia, and the Orient) Suvastika (or Swastika/Gammadion) is a mystic symbol which signifies peace, good-fortune, and eternal stability (*center*)... Note that both form a perfectly proportionate square. The Masonic Valknot (*right*) is a symbol composed of three intertwined triangles with nine-points: it is used to represent the power of, and devotion to Wotan/Odin.

What is the relevance of the number nine in heathen lore? The opinions of scholars vary somewhat on this question. Some believe in a synthesis of theories, converging with a cosmic, astronomical significance concerning the sum of nine. This same number is found methodically encrypted in the *Grimnismal* stanza defining the content of Valhalla:

Stz. 23: “Five hundred doors, and forty eke, I think, are in Valhall...”

[The cryptic sum of NINE (540: $5 + 4 + 0 = 9$)]

Further throughout the texts is read “Eight Hundred Einhaerjar through one door fare...” Bringing the total of Einhaerjar to 432,000

[Once again, a cryptic sum of NINE (432,000: $4+3+2$)]

Also found throughout the ancient (and post-christian) practice of Asatru are mystic icons related to this sum of nine; one instance are devotees/initiates in the warrior cult of Odin/Wotan, who are documented as carving “*nine gei rods*,” or ritual-wounds (cut by spear tip) into their chest as a mark of loyalty and kinship to the war-god. Additionally, Odin’s shamanic symbol, the *Wa’lk-not* (or Val-knot) that consists of nine geometric points, which configure the shape of three intertwined-triangles... Another well-known ancient Indo-European religious symbol, the *Fylfot* (or *Swastika*) widely used by both pre-christians—and later by christians—the *Gammadeon*, is composed of nine geo-spatial points, which form a flawless square. Even the symbol of Thor’s hammer, a well-known and widely used heathen religious emblem, consists of nine equidistant points (see *prior examples*).

The cosmic relation is clear when observed through the heavens; our Solar System has nine known planets (or “worlds”). Beginning with the Sun and moving outward, we acknowledge Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune (Pluto is sometimes included, however, it is actually a “dwarf” planet—by no means, and in any sense, like the other known planets of our solar system). Our Solar system also has a magnificent belt of encircling asteroids—a somewhat orderly collection of mile-wide titanic rocky-objects, the majority of which reside in a circular orbit between the orbits of Mars and that of Jupiter.

These planets are grouped into two distinct astronomical categories. The *Inner*, or *terrestrial*, planets are Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. These *inner* planets are relatively small, and with the exception of Mercury, have notably thinner atmospheres than those of the *outer* planets. The *Outer* (also called *gaseous*, *non-terrestrial*, or

celestial) planets are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune (Pluto is neither completely terrestrial, nor celestial in true nature).

There are more than 60 known moons orbiting these nine planets—Mercury and Venus (not so surprising) are the only two of these nine that have no orbiting moons.

The knowledge and framework of nine planets—or worlds—is clearly established and outlined by the ancient Indo-European heathens in three specific stanzas of the Elder Edda—those are:

Völuspa, Stanza 2

“I nine worlds remember, nine trees,”

Vafþrúðnismál, Stanza 43

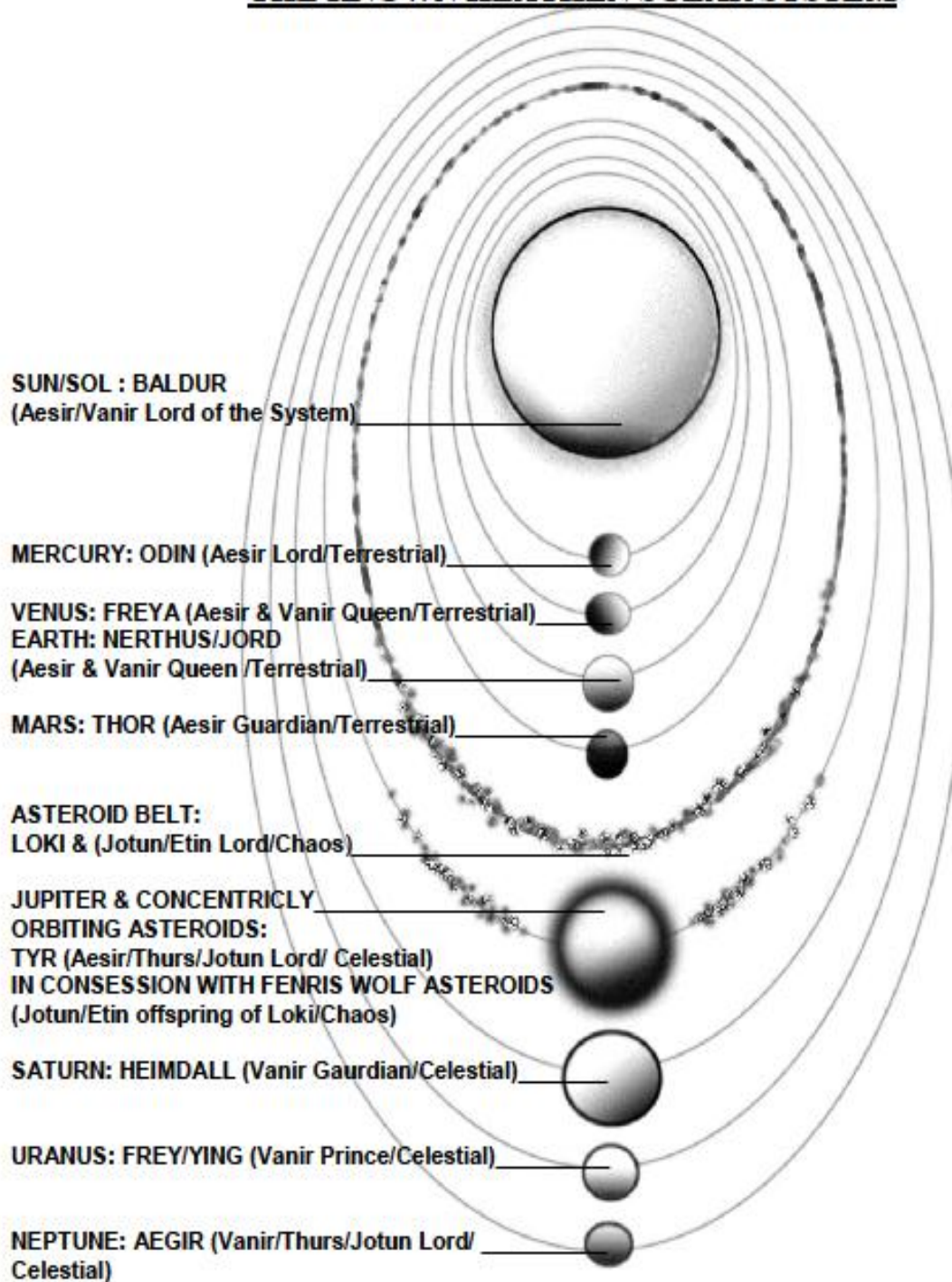
“For I have over each world traveled; to nine worlds I came...”

Alvíssmál, Stanza 9

“All nine worlds I have traveled over, and every being known.”

If, in fact, the known composition of our solar system, as was understood by ancient heathens, consisted of “nine worlds.” what are these worlds, and how did they fit into the heathen cosmology?

THE KNOWN HEATHEN SOLAR SYSTEM



"Nine worlds I know, the nine abodes" -Voluspa, Stanza 2

"For I have over each world traveled; to nine worlds I came..." - Vafthrudnismal, Stanza 43

"All nine worlds I have traveled over, and every being known." - Alvissmal, Stanza 9

The obvious method to understanding this question, assuming the function of a well-established system of heathen astronomy¹, would be perception and personification of each physical world with a heathen/Asatru deity corollary (as had been done with ancient deities of pagan Greece & Rome, and their naming of planets, and which are closest in relationship to heathen astronomy & astronomical events²). Just as in pagan Roman association, heathen Germanic lore identified the known solar system with Greco-Roman corollaries: specific deities of the Aesir and Vanir [the exception being “Saturday,” known by Heathens as “*Lauger*” day; but possibly associated with “*Surtr*” day—in *re* the *last day*, when *Surtr* destroys the world at *Ragnarok*]...

The SUN: The powerful center, and the first of the nine known worlds of the heathen cosmos; associated with Baldur, the “son” [a seemingly semantic consistency] of Odin and Freya; known in heathen lore as the “Bright,” “Shining,” and “Lofty One,” associated with the allegorical death & rebirth (death of the sun at night & rebirth of it at day).

MERCURY: Second planet; associated with the father of the “son” [“sun/sol”], Odin, the “Allfather.” This world has no known moons [linking it in nature to its “*bride*” planet, *Venus*], and is scientifically classified as a terrestrial world (consisting of solid matter), in keeping with the “terrestrial” nature of deities associated with the *Aesir* (material).

VENUS: Third world; nearly identical in size to Earth; associated with the *Vanir* [married into *Aesir*] bride of Odin, Freya. This planet is classified in astronomy as terrestrial—yet its atmosphere is composed of severe gasses, similar to those found on the non-terrestrial planets [associated with “celestial” *Vanir* worlds]. This planet, like Mercury/Odin, has no orbiting moon.

EARTH: The fourth planet; associated with Jord/Nerthus, the “*mother of life*,” “the queen of Midgard”; classed as a terrestrial planet in astronomy, it is also the seat of material existence in the heathen cosmos. Surrounding Earth/Nerthus is a super-powerful electro-magnetic energy field known as the *Van Allen belt* (a correlation of Midgard-defender Thor’s mighty Girdle-of-Power—“*Megin-Giörrð*”), which provides the planet with an incredible electro-magnetic shield, protecting its atmosphere from solar radiation and cosmic debris [*Etins/Jotuns*?]...

MARS: The “red” planet, not unlike the hair of the defending deity Thor, for which it is associated with... Scientifically classed as the *last* of the *terrestrial worlds* orbiting the Sun; seemingly it stands in defense of Earth/Nerthus, and the outer-ring of destructive asteroids [much as Thor defends the world/kingdom of *Midgard*];

ASTEROID BELT: Completely encircling the first four terrestrial worlds of our solar-system; representative Loki and the potential for chaos & destruction which he brings to the terrestrial planets—many individual asteroids have broken free of their orbit throughout the eons, and have struck the four inner worlds (including Earth), causing colossal injury to such planets...

JUPITYR: The planet of Tyr; ancient deity of the sky (*Tiw, Zeus, Deus, etc...*) Categorized as the first of the “celestial” planets/worlds outside of the great asteroid belt. Much like the keeper of Loki’s Fenris Wolf, Jupiter has a large number of asteroids which travel in concentric orbit with this world.

SATYRN: Heimdal, The bold homo-galactic sentry of the Vanir, holding the outerverse of the Waners and their ethereal kingdom secure. Satyrn, as is Uranus and Neptune, a planet composed of celestial gasses, portraying the ethereal nature of the Vanir.

URANUS: the cosmic domain of Freyer. A celestial planet of mist suited for a Vanir Lord such as the mighty Yng.

NEPTUNE: the frozen realm of Ægir, its surface—like the sea—is composed mainly water (ice) and rock. It is the coldest realm in the Solar System. Well-suited for the half-Thurs and his roiling cauldron of mead.

“For I have over each world traveled; to nine worlds I came...” - Vafþrúðnismál, Stanza 43
“All nine worlds I have traveled over, and every being known.” - Alvissmál, Stanza 9

FOOTNOTES:

^{1.} *The oldest known drawings of constellations are motifs on seals, vases, and gaming boards from the Sumerians, indicating that Eurasian notions of the constellations may have been developed as early as 4000 BCE; the oldest known Astronomical Monoliths constructed for measuring star-movement and related seasons were developed in Britain, at such sites such as Callanish and Stonehenge, over 4500 BCE (predating the concept and construction of the well-known Egyptian pyramids, by more than one-thousand-years)...These Neolithic Astronomical Monuments were complex and well-developed. Written evidence of this effective system of astronomy is found in the second-century BCE agricultural/pastoral Coligny calendar. Historic accounts, given by early Romano-British scribes, outline a complex system of stars, constellations, planets and seasons, named after Celtic deities by their Druid venerates.*

^{2.} *This would include days of the week (e.g., Tyr/Mars=Tuesday, Wotan/Mercury=Wednesday, etc.)*

HYMISKVIÐA:

THE COSMIC PERCEPTIONS HIDDEN WITHIN THE LAY OF HYMIR:

So cleverly “*hidden*,” or, more accurately “*purposefully-placed*,” throughout the surviving lore in the stanzas of the **Lay of Hymir** are found figurative explanations pertaining to—not only the planets of the solar-system—but also the heavenly bodies which comprise our very galaxy and cosmos, observed by pre-modern civilizations as far back as 4000 BCE¹... As was explained in the chapter The Mystical Sum of Nine, the adherents of ancient Heathenism had centuries of understanding about the cosmic star-symbols and planets that populated the night sky... Secreted within the *Lay of Hymir* are allegorical understandings of Astrology, Seafaring, and the Vernal Equinox/Summer Solstice, all related to one of the two seasons of the Heathen year²:

1

*Much game had gathered, the gods, of yore;
On wassail bent, the wands they shook,
The blood they scanned for brewing kettle,
And found that Ægir full many had.*

2

*Sate the sea god, smiling blandly,
Mistarblindi’s mighty offspring.
With threatening eye Ygg’s son him faced:
“To Æsir ever thou ale shalt brew.”*

The Sea-Lord, *Ægir*, is sending Thor on a voyage (and introduces the “*Seafaring*” component of the Hymiskviða)...Tyr is to accompany Thor on a quest for a Kettle (the black kettle also being a Heathen symbol for the night sky and cosmos)... What follows in the Hymiskviða are fragments, not necessarily in order, which map, in parable, the procession of winter and spring constellations...

23

*The girder of all,
the Earth beneath...*

This is likely a reference to the celestial equator...

10

*The giant harsh,
from his hunting came,
The icicles rattled...
For the fellows chin-forest,
frozen was...*

This is an obvious personification of Hymir as the season of winter and the winter solstice, and may even portray him as Sagittarius (the *hunter*)...

13

Eight [kettles] fell from the ledge, and one alone...of all was whole...

Each of the *un-whole* kettles represents one of the seven months proceeding from **winter** (December 21) and ending in **summer** (June 21)...

38

*Of Hlorrithi's goats, half dead on the ground;
In his leg the pole-horse, there was lame...*

The “half-goat” without use of its legs is an obvious reference to the constellation Capricorn that is symbolized as the half-goat, having attributes akin to its counterpart...

28

*Hlorrithi's stood,
and the stem he gripped,
And the sea-horse with water,
awash he lifted;
and all he bore....*

Thor lifts and bears-up the vessel full of water, essentially becoming the “water bearer” of the constellation Aquarius...

22

*Two whales on his hook,
did mighty Hymir
Soon pull up,
on a single cast;*

These two whales [fish] represent the constellation of Pisces...

32

*And with all the strength,
of a god he [Thor] struck [Hymir];
Whole was the fellow's, helmet-stem,
But shattered was the wine cup...*

33

*“Fair the treasure,
that from me is gone,
Since now the cup,
on my knees lies shattered.”*

These verses represent a number of cosmic events: the smashing of the unbreakable chalice signifies the **Vernal Equinox**; the “ramming” against Hymir’s head is a clear representation of the constellation of **Aries**, the “ram”; the chalice or cup represents the constellation **Triangulum** [also known as the “*Chalice*”], visible in the same month as Aries. The shattering could be viewed as the transition (destruction) from the winter “treasure” of Hymir’s season.

19

*Til before him an ox,
all black he found...*

This is a clear representation of the astrological station of **Taurus**....



7

*The goats with horns,
bedecked he guarded...*

20

for the reiner-of-goats...

Now this is the constellation of **Auriga** (found in the same month as **Taurus**) it is represented by a *bearded man holding fast to a goat in his lap (Thor)*....

15

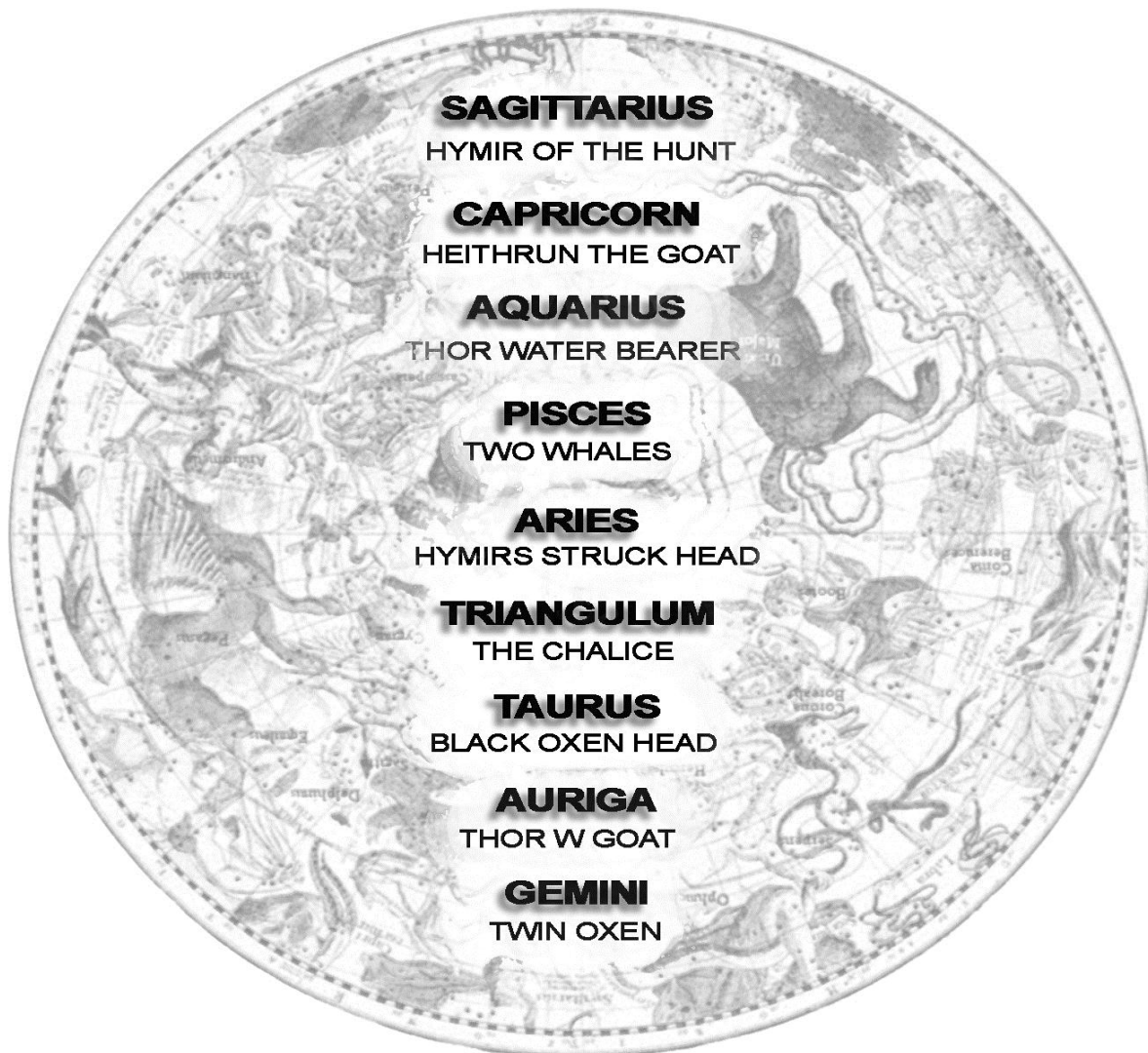
*Alone two oxen,
of Hymir's ate...*

Thor consumes two [twin] oxen, a clear representation of the *twins* of the constellation **Gemini**...

*The girder of all,
the earth beneath ...*

*Thor has caught the Midgard Serpent, here seen as the **Solar Equator** and personifying the end of the seven-months, and the beginning of the **Summer Solstice**.*

Of further note is that the two primary characters interact with specific elements pertaining to the respective constellations: Thor is born of **Earth** (Jord) and is master of the weather (**Air**)—Thor is involved with Capricorn, Aquarius, Taurus, and Gemini (Earth and Air astrological signs)... Hymir interacts with astrological signs belonging to **Fire** and **Water [Ice]**: common elements associated with *Thurs/Ettns*...



FOOT NOTES:

1 The oldest known drawings of constellations are motifs found upon seals, vases, and gaming boards from the Sumerians, indicating that constellations may possibly have been developed as early as 4500 BCE; the oldest known astronomical measuring monoliths were constructed at sites such as "Stonehenge," "Goseck Henge," and "Callanish" as early as 4500 BCE... All are part of the Proto-Indo-European period.

2 The Majority of the ancient Nordic/Germanic & Keltic tribes divided the year into two seasons: Spring and Winter, which were marked by the Winter & Summer Solstices.

ODIN'S RAVEN SONG

THORPE TRANSLATION

In the dales dwells
The prescient Dis,
From Yggdrasil's ash sunk down,
Of Alfen race, Idun by name,
The youngest of Ivaldi's elder children...

She ill brooked her descent
Under the hoar tree's trunk confined...

She would not happy be
With Norvi's daughter,
Accustomed to a pleasanter
Abode at home...

A wolf skin they gave her,
In which herself she clad...

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